

A PILOT STUDY COMPARING THE INDIVIDUALIZED AND GROUPED METHODS OF
READING INSTRUCTION IN THE FIFTH AND SIXTH GRADES

by 500

HAROLD E. BROWN

B. S., Kansas State University, 1950

A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1969

Approved by:


Major Professor

LD
2668
R4
1969
B75
C.2

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For their help and assistance, the writer wishes to thank Dr. Harlan Trennepohl, his major professor, and Dr. Leo Schell. He would also like to express his appreciation to the school board of Manhattan Unified School District #383 for allowing this research work to be conducted within the regular classroom environment.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED.	1
The Problem	1
Statement of the problem	1
Importance of the study	2
Limitations of the study.	3
Definitions of Terms Used	3
Grouped method of reading instruction	3
Individualized reading.	3
Pacing.	4
Seeking	4
Self-Selection.	4
Organization of the remainder of this report.	4
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	5
Basic Assumptions of Individualized Reading	5
Some Advantages of Individualized Reading	8
Some Disadvantages of Individualized Reading.	10
Combining Individualized Reading With Basal Program	11
Related Research Results.	13
PROCEDURE.	18
Preliminary Steps	18
Experimental Design	18

	111
	PAGE
ANALYSIS	21
Analysis of Study's Implications.	21
REPORT OF THE STUDY.	22
SUMMARY, ...	34
Conclusions	35
Recommendations	35
BIBLIOGRAPHY	37
APPENDIX	42

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
I. Student Scores and Results for the October-January Period of the Study	24
II. Student Scores and Results for the January-March Period of the Study	26
III. Comparison of Groups A and B on Grade Placement Averages .	29
IV. Number of Pages of Books Read for Recreational Purposes During Study	31
V. October Scores Used for the Pairing and Random Placing of Students Into Groups.	42

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
1. Gains in Word Meaning Scores (October-January)	43
2. Gains in Paragraph Meaning Scores (October-January).	44
3. Gains in Total Reading Scores (October-January).	45
4. Gains in Word Meaning Scores (January-March)	46
5. Gains in Paragraph Meaning Scores (January-March).	47
6. Gains in Total Reading Scores (January-March).	48
7. Cover Letter to Parents Accompanying Questionnaire on Individualized Reading	49
8. Parent Questionnaire and Responses on Individualized Reading.	50
9. Pupil Questionnaire and Responses on Individualized Reading.	51

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

The teaching of reading has long been of great concern to educators in the elementary school. They have felt that not only are the skills of reading to be taught but also the ability to comprehend what is read. The question then arises as to which teaching methods can best be utilized to develop the reading abilities needed by students. Many educators feel that ability grouping with a basal reader series is the logical, sequential approach to developing reading skills. Others in the field feel that the individualized reading method which attempts to meet the pupils' individual needs is a more successful approach to the teaching of reading.

The Problem

Statement of the problem. With the advent of interest in the individualized reading method, some criticism has developed among educators concerning the more traditional methods of reading instruction. At the present time the elementary schools of Manhattan Unified School District #383 use an ability grouping method of teaching reading with the Scott-Foresman Basal Reader Series as the primary source for reading instruction.

This study was designed to use an individualized reading method in comparison to the grouped approach. One group within the class was designated as Group A and followed the individualized reading method

during a ten-week period and the ability grouping method during another ten-week period. Group B was assigned in reverse order. This study was conducted in an attempt to answer the following questions:

- (1) With which method of reading instruction, individualized or grouped, did pupils show more progress in word meaning, paragraph meaning, or total reading during the first ten weeks?
- (2) Did the results from the second ten weeks, when Group B became the experimental group and Group A the control group, substantiate the finding of the first ten-week results?
- (3) Did the children who used the individualized reading method in the first period and the grouped method in the second (Group A) show more or less achievement in reading than children who were instructed by the grouped method the first period and the individualized method the second (Group B)?
- (4) Did the students from both groups gain a new interest in reading because of the individualized reading methods employed this year?

Importance of the study. Educators feel that the teaching of reading is vital at the elementary school level. Reading skills and reading comprehension are prime factors in the child's ability to learn successfully in any subject field. In addition to this, the elementary school should develop within the child a love for reading so that he may become a well-informed, enlightened citizen when he reaches adulthood.

As a result, the methods of teaching reading should be evaluated to see whether they are meeting the present and future needs of the students.

Limitations of the study. Because of the relatively small number of students involved and the uniqueness of the combined room situation in which the study was carried out, the research was intended to be a pilot study. It is hoped that school officials in Unified District #383, as a result of this pilot study, will wish to conduct further research studies involving individualized reading.

Definitions of Terms Used

Grouped Method of Reading Instruction. A more traditional approach to the teaching of reading in which a basal reader series of textbooks is used as the main basis for instruction. The children are organized according to reading ability. Normally there are from three to five groups ranging from high to low ability groups. Workbooks published in conjunction with the basal reader are used primarily for practice of reading skills which have been presented through the basal reader lessons.

Individualized Reading. A method of teaching reading in which several basic principles are involved. Children are allowed to select books or other materials that they wish to read. There are individual conferences with the teacher, children may be temporarily grouped to study specific reading skills, books which have been read are shared with other members of the class in various ways, and children keep

records on books which they have read. In addition to this, teachers keep records on children's strengths, weaknesses, and needs in reading.

Pacing. The uniqueness of each child to progress at his own rate because of different hereditary and environmental factors in his life.

Seeking. The natural desire of a child to look for and find those things which will permit him to grow and mature in all aspects of his life.

Self-Selection. A term used to describe the selection of materials by students for their individualized reading. The teacher may guide the child to a certain extent in selection, but the final selection is normally left to the child.

The Organization of the Remainder of This Report

Section II will include a review of literature in which other similar research problems involving individualized reading are discussed. Section III will develop the procedure for the research. This includes the preliminary steps and the experimental design used. The analysis of techniques used in the research are discussed in Section IV. Section V contains a report of the study. Section VI contains an annotated bibliography. The final section is the appendix which contains certain related materials.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Basic Assumptions of Individualized Reading. Although much has been written in the last few years about the individualized approach to reading, it doesn't seem to be a completely new approach to reading instruction. Certainly, elements of individualized instruction were found in the days of the single tutor and his private pupil. Also, certain aspects of individualized instruction were found in the early days in many one-room country schools.

With the advent of the McGuffey Reader came an approach to reading which was the use of a basal reader. Several elements were inherent in this method. Children in each class were expected to read the same materials. Skills were taught in a lock-step method. Each child was expected to be successful in a given skill before progressing to the next step. Children had to reach a certain level in ability before they could proceed to the next book or grade level.

As early as 1888, questions were raised about the advisability of requiring each child to succeed at the same rate in his schoolwork. Advocates of this questioning attitude cited well-known facts about child development to indicate that children do not learn at the same rate, nor should they be required to do so.

Primarily in the 1920's and thereafter, grouping procedures in reading were instituted. This method grew out of a desire to fit the child more nearly into a proper category as far as his reading ability

was concerned. By dividing the reading class into above average, average, and below average readers, a teacher could concentrate more on the needs of the children within this group. Groups were fairly stable, but it was possible for a child to move from one group to another if he developed reading problems which required his presence in a class of lower ability.

Many teachers were still not satisfied with the results obtained from the grouping procedure. They reasoned that if grouping would bring the child closer to a situation where he could work without frustration or boredom, there should be a system which could do even better. Teachers were still having problems with individual differences within their groups. Also, a question teachers often raised was, "What do I do with groups two and three when I'm working with group one?" Such malpractices as giving workbooks to the groups as "busy-work" and then not checking them, resulted from the frustration of some teachers who used the group method in instruction.

In 1952, Olson¹ published an article concerning child development in which he stated, "Three useful concepts emerge on ways in which books may be used by children and teachers for purposes of problem solving, information, or entertainment and relaxation. They are seeking behavior,

¹Willard C. Olson, "Seeking, Self-Selection, and Facing in the Use of Books by Children," The Packet, 7:3-10, Spring, 1952, cited by Jeannette Veatch, Individualizing Your Reading Program, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1959). 242 pp.

self-selection, and pacing." From this and other studies done in 1952 and 1953, the advocates of individualized reading methods developed their concepts.

Since the advent of Olson's article many articles, books, pamphlets, theses, and papers have discussed the relative merits of individualized reading. This writer considers the pros and cons of the subject in the remainder of this paper.

There are many different systems or methods which profess to be "Individualized Reading". Some are little more than free reading periods in which students silently read stories they have selected. Individualized reading, however, has some definite features which identify it from other approaches. Items which seem to be in common as far as individualized reading programs are concerned include:

- (1) Children select what they want to read. In some cases it is necessary for the teacher to guide the selection if help is needed or wanted.
- (2) Children have individual conferences with the teacher. During these conferences there may be such things as discussion of the story, checking of word skills and comprehension, and oral reading of a selection made by the student.
- (3) Grouping of students is done on a temporary basis for a specific purpose only.
- (4) Records are kept by the teacher and by the child on improvement of certain skills and the number of books completed.

Some Advantages of Individualized Reading. Much writing has occurred in the last few years about individualized reading. Those in favor of this approach list as one of their main premises the fact that children are different and progress physically and mentally at a different rate. It is their contention that it is like trying to force a square peg into a round hole when educators force children, either as a whole class or in groups, to read the same materials at the same time. They point to the advocates of the group method as an admission that teachers are aware of differences in children and are trying to compensate. They contend that if grouping means "getting close", then why not individualize and meet the needs of each child more perfectly. To sum it up Heffernan² states, "We accept glibly that there are individual differences, even in family members, but seem to forget it in formal education".

Another concern of some writers is the stigma which sometimes results from grouping. This occurs mostly with the students who are in the "slow" group. Many of these students feel frustrated by the grouping system and begin to wonder, "What's the use?" There is also a tendency for other students to feel superior to these students in the "slow" group. This superiority will be shown by their actions and words. With individualized reading, little thought is given by the students to whether the materials being read are easy or hard. There are cases

²Helen Heffernan, "What is Individualized Reading?" Grade Teacher, 82:28, March, 1965.

where intelligent students occasionally read easy materials that may be of high interest, and by the same token, there are rather poor readers who stretch their reading ability by reading a particular story that is of great interest to them.

Proponents of individualized reading also feel that pupil-teacher conferences are of great benefit. Teachers get to know the student more intimately as they talk over excerpts of the materials that the child has read. It gives the child a chance to know the teacher better and lets him feel that an adult is vitally interested in what he has to say. It is also an opportunity for a teacher to check on a student's reading skills individually.

Another argument in favor of individualized reading is that it is a more realistic approach to reading. It is felt that one of the main reasons for the reading program in schools is to develop future citizens who are voracious readers. The contention is that the basal reader is stifling reading interest rather than creating it. By allowing children to read what they would like to read, love of reading can be stimulated. Barbe³ states that basically there are three types of readers in schools: (1) those who are capable of reading better; (2) those who are incapable of reading better; (3) and those who know how but don't care to read. It is his contention that in the past our main thrust has been pointed at the first two groups and we have not tried to motivate the

³Walter Barbe, "Personalized or Individualized Reading Instruction," Education, 81:537-39, May, 1961.

last group. He feels that individualized reading could be an answer to that problem.

In summary, Groff⁴ states, "Evidence continues to mount that with individualized reading, normal or above normal gains in reading vocabulary and comprehension can be expected, along with greater although less measurable, advances in creative and critical reading."

Some Disadvantages of Individualized Reading. Many educators feel that individualized reading is just another in a long line of educational "gimmicks". They feel that it is much too early to throw a basal reading program overboard until much more evidence has been gathered concerning individualized reading.

Many reading authorities feel that word skills, phonics, and other reading tools are taught too incidentally in individualized reading. They feel that possibly there are some above average teachers who can handle this problem but that they would also be the kind of teachers who would do a good job with a basal reading program simply because they are thorough teachers.

Another criticism is that it is necessary to have a large number of books available in order to have a successful individualized program. It is felt that this could create a very big problem for certain school districts that are in financial difficulties.

⁴Patrick Groff, "Helping Teachers Begin Individualized Reading," National Elementary Principal, 43:47-50, Feb., 1964.

Grotberg⁵ feels that one problem which exists for those who espouse the individualized reading approach is that there is too much disagreement as to what really constitutes "Individualized Reading". She feels that until definite steps and goals can be developed and agreed upon, it can hardly be called a reading method. She feels, also, that the philosophy stated by Olson⁶ is untenable because it has not been proven in the light of available knowledge.

Unless a teacher is well-organized, he will find it difficult to handle an individualized method of reading. He must oversee the selection of books to be sure that students are selecting appropriate materials, be constantly evaluating individual student's needs and progress, keep detailed records on all students, and be able to organize temporary groups of students who are in need of a specific lesson.

Combining Individualized Reading With Basal Program. Many educators feel that there is a place for individualized reading within the modern school curriculum. They feel, however, that it will be incorporated into the program without doing away with the basal reading approach completely. Gans⁷ states that a balanced program should result which will do the following things:

- (1) Teach children the mechanics of reading.

⁵Edith Grotberg, "Individual Reading--A Symbol for Change," Education, 87:7-10, September, 1966.

⁶Olson, loc. cit.

⁷Roma Gans, "Balanced Program", Grade Teacher, 84:126, March, 1967.

- (2) Develop their abilities to get information from materials in print.
- (3) Develop the kind of readers who get personal satisfaction from reading.

Most educators feel that the individual conference with teacher and pupil is a very strong point in individualized reading. It is also generally felt that there should be much more research on individualized reading using accurate scientific methods in order to find out exactly what the future of individualized reading will be in formal education of the future.

Stauffer⁸ feels that there is much to be said for both the basal reader and individualized reading. He feels that individualized reading is more an attitude toward the place of reading in the curriculum, toward the materials used, and toward the child's needs. He doesn't accept the premise that it is a single method or technique.

Stauffer feels that there are advantages in the basal reader program which should not be given up. These include a very thorough, complete, and logical approach to the study of word skills, and an opportunity to work in a group in which interaction and discussion can take place. He feels that individualized reading can contribute the motivation for reading, the opportunity to work closely with the teacher, and a satisfaction which can't easily result from the basal reading

⁸Russell G. Stauffer, "Individualized and Group-Type Directed Reading Instruction," Elementary English, 37:375-382, October, 1960.

approach. He does not see contradiction in the two methods, but feels the two methods can be complementary.

It is this writer's feeling that the next decade will bring forth a great deal of research and discussion about the relative merits of the individualized reading method and that all or parts of its philosophy will be accepted into the curriculum of many schools.

Related Research Results. In the years since 1952 there have been a number of research reports written concerning the relative merits of individualized versus ability grouping methods of teaching reading. Results of this research are rather inconclusive with some showing more reading improvement with the use of individualized reading instruction, some showing no significant differences, and yet others which show advantages to the ability grouping approach.

Jenkins⁹ cited some significant research done in Whittier, California. The research extended over a period of one year and compared reading gains made by one hundred sixty boys and girls selected from eight second grade classes. These students were then divided into a control group which used the basal reader and another group which used the individualized method of reading instruction. The teachers were compared according to the amount of educational training and experience each had. The results, according to standardized reading tests, indicated significantly better gains with the experimental group than with

⁹Marian Jenkins, "Self-Selection in Reading," The Reading Teacher, 11:84-90, December, 1957.

the control group. The control group averaged 1.14 years in total reading gains while the experimental group showed gains of 1.41 years.

Schwartzberg¹⁰ cited research which indicated good gains as far as students who were taught with individualized methods. The test included twenty-two fifth grade pupils whose range of I.Q. was from 72 to 105 with a mean of 88.8. These students showed good gains as far as reading ability was concerned, but, since there was no control group in the study, the significance of the research was somewhat questionable.

Johnson¹¹ had thirty-six fifth grade children who, at the beginning of the year, had reading scores ranging from 3.1 to 8.6 with a median of 5.5. At the end of that year of instruction, the reading scores ranged from 4.4 to 9.4 with a median of 7.2. The writer admitted that there may have been too many factors to make the improvement overly significant, but she felt the improvement of the reading scores showed definite growth in the students' reading ability. Again, there was no control group.

Several writers have reported that there was no significant difference between individualized reading and ability grouping as far

¹⁰Herbert Schwartzberg, "What Children Think of Individualized Reading," The Reading Teacher, 16:86-9, November, 1962.

¹¹Mabel L. Johnson, "Individualized Reading Experience," New York State Education, June, 1951. (n.p.)(n.v.) cited by Jeannette Veatch, Individualizing Your Reading Program, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1959). 242 pp.

as gains in reading achievement were concerned. Among those writers is Kaar¹² who found that a control group which used a basal reader showed an average of nine months growth in vocabulary and eight months in reading comprehension, while students in the individualized program had an average eight months improvement in vocabulary and six months growth in reading comprehension.

Sartain¹³ indicated that there was no significant difference in reading growth between students in individualized reading and those in the basal reader in research conducted in the public schools of Roseville, Minnesota. Ten classes were used in the research which lasted three months. There was a significant difference in word recognition where the control group made an average improvement of .60 while children in the individualized group made .35 improvement. This was significant at the .05 level with one degree of freedom.

According to Lofthouse¹⁴ there seemed to be no significant difference in the individualized reading method and the ability grouping with the basal reader in a survey of research which she made. She came to the conclusion that, "Sufficient data are definitely not yet available to warrant the changing of school systems from the traditional to

¹²Harold Kaar, "An Experiment with Individualized Methods of Teaching Reading," The Reading Teacher, 7:174, February, 1954.

¹³Harry Sartain, "The Roseville Experiment with Individualized Reading," The Reading Teacher, 13:277-81, April, 1960.

¹⁴Yvonne Lofthouse, "Individualized Reading--Significant Research," The Reading Teacher, 16:35-7, September, 1962.

the individualized approach."

There is other research which has shown better results for the grouped method of reading instruction. Safford¹⁵ reports on one of the most important studies conducted in Los Angeles County, California. Seven classes ranging from third to sixth grades which used various individualized approaches to reading were chosen. The teachers of these classes were not aware that their students were included in the research. At the end of the year the total reading gains of the experimental group were compared with the rest of the classes in the district and with the national norms on a standardized achievement test. The experimental group's average gains ranged from .16 to .79 while national norms were 1.00 and district norms were 1.25.

Safford concluded that an important factor in the research was the fact that the teachers of the experimental group were not aware of the research being conducted and, therefore, the results were more realistic. This experiment was a comparison with the district and nation as a whole, having no control group.

Rothrock¹⁶ conducted a survey in five midwestern states for the purpose of discovering the extent to which individualized reading was used and the influence that it had made on the reading curriculum. The survey was conducted in order to find the following information: how

¹⁵Alton L. Safford, "Evaluation of an Individualized Reading Program," The Reading Teacher, 12:266-70, April, 1960.

¹⁶Dayton Rothrock, "Teachers Surveyed: A Decade of Individualized Reading", Elementary English, 45:754-57, October, 1968.

widely the individualized reading plan was being used, the responses of teachers who used it, those who had tried it but later abandoned it, teachers who never used it, and questions pertaining to the influence of individualized reading and trends in reading as a result of its use.

Of the 150 responses to the survey it was found that 86 per cent of the teachers who had experience with individualized reading still used some form of it in reading instruction. Most of these teachers used it in conjunction with a basal approach or some type of grouping. The basic criticism of individualized reading was that the skills were difficult to teach. Most teachers felt that there was more interest in reading as a result of individualized reading and that pupil-teacher conferences were valuable. In conclusion, Rothrock suggests that the survey shows many teachers using individualized reading as a part of an eclectic approach.

In conclusion, research does not seem to substantiate any particular point of view as far as the two general methods being discussed. Some research has shown little or no significant difference in the results obtained from individualized reading or ability grouping. In other research, distinct advantages have been shown to one or the other. This writer feels that by localizing the research problem to his particular classroom, he has gained insight into the methods that will be more desirable for his students.

PROCEDURE

Preliminary steps. Approval of the research problem was obtained from the elementary curriculum supervisor and the school board of Manhattan Unified School District #383. Students were informed that a reading study was to be conducted in the room and a brief explanation was given as to how it would be done.

Experimental design. The fifth and sixth grade students involved in the study were members of a combined room. Pairs of students in this room were matched according to grade level and average scores from a Stanford Achievement Test taken in early October. A table showing the matching procedure used for this study is found in the Appendix on page 42. Three students had scores on the October test which did not match closely enough with any other student in the class. These scores were not included in the study, although the students participated in all phases of the study.

After the students were paired, they were assigned at random to Group A or B. Thus, each group included a cross-section of the fifth and sixth graders.

During the first ten weeks the students in Group A were instructed by the individualized reading method which included reading books, magazines, and newspapers of their choice. In addition to self-selected reading, the students had weekly individual conferences with the teacher, shared books and newspaper articles with the class, and kept records of

books read. Skills were taught at conference time and the teacher kept a record of individual conferences.

The students assigned to Group B were the control group during the first ten weeks. They were grouped according to ability and placed in the Scott-Foresman Basal Reader Series and the reading workbook which accompanies the series.

At the end of the first ten-week period in mid-January, the reading battery from the Stanford Achievement Test was again administered. Following the testing the students in Group A became the control group while Group B became the experimental group. A third Stanford Achievement Test was administered in late March after another ten-week period.

Although less objective, an attempt was also made in this study to determine student and parent attitude changes as a result of the experience within individualized reading instruction. Questionnaires were sent home to parents in April. They contained questions about the student's reading habits at home as a consequence of his reading instruction at school. These questionnaires were returned to school unsigned. An example of the letter sent to parents is found on page 49 in the Appendix.

A student's survey was also made in April to determine any changes in attitude which may have taken place as a result of reading instruction methods used during the year. In order to obtain frank and honest answers, these survey forms were not to be signed by the students.

As a further indicator of reading interest, each student kept

a record of books he completed during the period of testing. Only books read for recreational purposes were to be included. Since the results were not to be publicized, the students were urged to be accurate in recording the number of pages read.

ANALYSIS

Test scores from the January test for both Groups A and B were compared to determine whether or not an appreciable difference occurred in reading achievement as a result of different instructional methods. Tables were constructed to show these differences for both groups and mean scores were computed.

Test results from the March tests were used to substantiate the results of the first period scores. During the second half of the study, Group B was the experimental group and Group A the control group.

Another type of comparison was to measure the improvement of reading achievement for each group during the entire study. Again, Group A was compared to Group B. The purpose of this computation was to determine whether or not there was an advantage to presenting the individualized method of reading before or after the group method.

Analysis of study's implications. As previously stated, the study included a rather small number of students and was unique because it was conducted in a combination fifth and sixth grade room. Two advantages of the study compared to some previous ones referred to in the review of literature in this report were evident. In this study, control and experimental groups were used and there was only one teacher conducting the study which tended to obviate a difference in results because of teacher personalities. If feasible, studies involving larger groups could follow this research.

REPORT OF THE STUDY

The first question to be considered by this pilot study was whether or not the individualized method of reading instruction or the basal reading method was more effective in the teaching of reading. The specific reading skills to be tested were word meaning and paragraph meaning with the Stanford Achievement Test as the measuring device.

Group A (individualized during the first ten weeks) showed a range of improvement in word meaning during the first ten weeks of the study from $-.1$ to $+1.1$ years with an average improvement of $+.51$ years. Three readers in Group A had below average improvement, two had average improvement, and seven showed above average improvement in word meaning. Group B (basal during the first ten weeks) showed a range of improvement in word meaning from $-.3$ to $+2.0$ years or an average of $+.65$ years. Three students in Group B showed below average improvement, three students made average improvement, and six students progressed more than average in word meaning.

In the paragraph meaning test in January, Group A showed a range of improvement from $-.1$ to $+3.7$ years with an average improvement of $+.89$ years. Three students in Group A had below average scores in paragraph meaning, none were average, and eight students performed at an above average rate. Students in Group B had a range in paragraph meaning of -1.5 to $+1.8$ years with an average of $+.44$ years. Group B had three

students who improved less than average, one who gained at the average rate, and seven who progressed at a higher than average rate.

Another way of checking each groups' progress was to average the scores for word and paragraph meaning. Using this method, Group A showed an average improvement in total reading of $+.70$ years and Group B showed a $+.54$ years.

Looking at the test results for the first ten weeks, there seems to be very little difference in test scores as far as the method of reading instruction used. There seemed to be a slight advantage to the use of individualized reading as paragraph meaning was concerned, whereas students in basal reading showed slightly more improvement in word meaning. Table I on the following page shows the individual student scores and their averages for the first ten weeks of this study.

As was stated earlier in this report, one of the purposes for interchanging the groups in January was to check the results obtained during the first ten weeks of the test. The students were tested again in March after another ten weeks.

Test results in March of Group B (now an individualized group) showed a range of improvement in word meaning from $-.6$ to $+1.0$ years with an average of $+.12$. Seven students showed below average progress, one showed average progress, and three were above average in gains. Students in Group A showed a range of improvement in word meaning from $-.3$ to $+1.7$ years. The average improvement for Group A in word meaning was $+.54$ years. Four students in Group A were below average improvement

TABLE I

STUDENT SCORES AND RESULTS FOR THE OCTOBER-JANUARY PERIOD OF THE STUDY

Name of Group and Student	Word Mean. Jan.	Par. Mean. Jan.	Total Rdng. Jan.	Word Mean. Result	Par. Mean. Result	Total Rdng. Result	Average * Growth Tot. Reading
<u>GROUP A (IND.)</u>							
<u>6th</u>							
Ellen D.	6.9	6.2	6.55	+.5	+.9	+.7	+
Johnny S.	5.2	6.2	5.7	+.3	+.5	+.4	+
Brenda H.	5.4	4.8	5.1	+.7	+.0	+.35	+
Barbara S.	7.1	8.0	7.55	+.3	+1.2	+.75	+
Jennifer J.	8.3	10.6	9.45	+1.0	+3.7	+2.35	+
<u>5th</u>							
Doug P.	3.2	3.1	3.15	-.1	-.3	-.2	-
Philip S.	3.8	4.4	4.1	+.5	+.6	+.55	+
Larry P.	6.7	6.1	6.45	+1.1	+.8	+.95	+
Randy V.	7.8	5.2	6.5	+.5	+.6	+.55	+
Kristin D.	7.5	6.3	6.9	+.5	+.0	+.25	-
Gaye H.	7.8	9.5+	8.65	+.3	+1.8	+1.05	+
GROUP TOTALS (AVE.)	---	---	---	+.51	+.89	+.70	+
<u>GROUP B (BASAL)</u>							
<u>6th</u>							
Brenda P.	6.6	6.1	6.35	+.2	-.7	-.25	-
Philip G.	6.6	6.0	6.3	+.7	+.8	+.75	+
Linda L.	5.1	2.9	4.0	+.9	-1.5	-.3	-
Robert A.	8.3	8.4	8.35	+.8	+1.8	+1.3	+
Teresa C.	7.3	7.8	7.55	-.3	+1.2	+.45	+
<u>5th</u>							
Linda N.	3.7	3.0	3.35	+.0	+.3	+.15	-
Louise P.	4.3	4.4	4.35	+.7	+.5	+.6	+
Cindy C.	5.4	5.9	5.65	+.3	+.6	+.45	+
Kent M.	6.7	7.5	7.1	+1.5	+.7	+1.1	+
Marion D.	7.3	6.1	6.7	+.3	-.7	-.2	-
Shari S.	9.5+	9.5+	9.5+	+2.0	+1.8	+1.9	+
GROUP TOTALS (AVE.)	---	---	---	+.65	+.44	+.54	+

* This column shows (+) where students had three months or more total reading growth during the October-January period. A (-) indicates a student who showed less than three months total reading growth.

none were average, and seven were above average in word meaning scores.

Group B had a range of $-.6$ to $+2.0$ years in paragraph meaning in the March tests with an average improvement of $+.95$ years. Three students in Group B had below average improvement, none had an average improvement, and eight students had above average improvement in paragraph meaning. On the other hand, Group A had a range of improvement in paragraph meaning from $-.6$ to $+2.5$ years with an average improvement of $+.62$ years. Four students in Group A showed below average improvement in this category, none were average, and seven gained more than average.

By averaging paragraph and word meaning scores from the Stanford Achievement Tests taken in March, it was found that the students in Group A (basal reading group) had an average improvement of $+.577$ years while students in Group B (individualized reading group) had an average improvement of $+.532$. Graphs showing the distribution of reading score improvements on all tests may be found on pages 43 to 48 in the Appendix. In addition to this, Table II on page 26 shows the individual student scores and their averages for the second ten weeks of the study.

The test scores from the second ten week period seem to verify the findings from the first ten weeks. The average improvement of the total reading scores for both groups was very similar for both groups. Also, during both periods the group which was in the basal reader group had slightly higher test scores in the word meaning section of the Stanford Achievement Test while the students in the individualized reading tended to do better on the paragraph meaning scores. It may be

TABLE II

STUDENT SCORES AND RESULTS FOR THE JANUARY-MARCH PERIOD OF THE STUDY

<u>GROUP A (BASAL)</u>							
<u>6th</u>							
Ellen D.	7.5	8.4	7.95	+.6	+2.2	+1.4	+
Johnny S.	6.0	6.8	6.4	+.8	+.6	+.7	+
Brenda H.	5.1	4.3	4.7	-.3	-.5	-.4	-
Barbara S.	8.3	9.2	8.75	+1.2	+1.2	+1.2	+
Jennifer J.	8.3	10.4	9.35	+.0	-.2	-.1	-
<u>5th</u>							
Doug P.	3.6	3.6	3.6	+.4	+.5	+.45	+
Philip S.	3.7	4.8	4.25	-.1	+.4	+.15	-
Larry P.	7.3	6.8	7.05	+.6	+.7	+.65	+
Randy V.	9.5+	7.7	8.6	+1.7	+2.5	+2.1	+
Kristin D.	7.5	5.7	6.6	+.0	-.6	-.3	-
Gaye H.	8.8	9.5+	9.15	+1.0	+.0	+.5	+
GROUP TOTALS (AVE.)	---	---		+.54	+.62	+.577	+
<u>GROUP B (IND.)</u>							
<u>6th</u>							
Brenda P.	6.8	7.0	6.9	+.2	+.9	+.55	+
Philip G.	6.8	7.0	6.9	+.2	+1.0	+.6	+
Linda L.	4.7	4.8	4.75	-.4	+1.9	+.75	+
Robert A.	8.8	10.0	9.4	+.5	+1.6	+1.05	+
Teresa C.	7.6	8.7	8.15	+.3	+.9	+.6	+
<u>5th</u>							
Linda N.	4.7	4.3	4.5	+1.0	+1.3	+1.15	+
Louise P.	3.8	4.2	4.0	-.5	-.2	-.35	-
Cindy C.	5.1	5.3	5.2	-.3	-.6	-.45	-
Kent M.	6.1	9.5+	7.8	-.6	+2.0	+.7	+
Marion D.	8.2	7.7	7.95	+.9	+1.6	+1.25	+
Shari S.	9.5+	9.5+	9.5+	+.0	+.0	+.0	-
GROUP TOTALS (AVE.)	---	---		+.12	+.95	+.532	+

* This column shows (+) where students had three months or more total reading growth during the January-March period. A (-) indicates a student who showed less than three months total reading growth.

that the students in the basal group were exposed more to the meaning of new words as they were introduced to new stories. In addition to this, there may have been more emphasis on word attack skills in class discussions and use of the workbooks which accompanies the reading series. On the other hand, the students in individualized reading may have improved their reading comprehension more because they were reading materials of their choice and tended to be a little more motivated to read than the students who were assigned stories by the teacher.

The third question to be explored by this pilot study was whether students who started in individualized reading and then transferred to the basal reader (Group A) would show greater or less achievement in reading than the group which started in the basal reader and then went to individualized reading (Group B). Although there was not a great difference in the groups as far as their total growth, there seemed to be a tendency for Group A to show more progress in word meaning, paragraph meaning, and total reading. Group A progressed from a 5.83 grade placement in October for word meaning to a grade placement of 6.87 for an overall average improvement of 1.04 years for word meaning. Group B increased from a grade placement of 5.79 in October to 6.55 in March for an average gain of .76 years. Group A went from a grade placement of 5.51 in October to 7.18 in March in paragraph meaning for an overall average progression of 1.67. Group B gained from a grade placement average of 5.71 in October to 7.09 in March for an average improvement of 1.38. The average total reading improvement for Group A was from

5.67 to 7.025 for an increase in grade placement of 1.355. Group B showed a total reading gain in placement from 5.75 to 6.82 for an improvement of 1.07 in grade placement. Table III on page 29 illustrates the data involving the third question of the report.

It is the writer's belief that the slightly better scores attained by Group A may be the result of a natural motivation for them. This group started in individualized reading in the fall when it was a rather new way of reading instruction for them and they may have reacted by taking more interest in reading even after transferring to the basal reader series later in the year. On the other hand, the students in Group B started with the regular program and individualized reading was not a new concept to them when they entered that phase of the study in January.

In an effort to ascertain whether new interest was created in reading because of the use of individualized reading, three methods were used. These included questionnaires to both the students and the parents at the conclusion of the study and a record of book pages read by individual students for recreational purposes.

During the first ten-week period Group A (the experimental group) read a total of 47,670 pages while Group B (the control group) was reading 41,117 pages. This meant that students in the individualized reading program were reading about 6,500 more pages than those in the basal reader. But, during the second ten weeks Group A, now in the basal reader, read 53,075 pages while Group B, in the individualized reading program, read 43,724 pages. There seemed to be little relationship

TABLE III
COMPARISON OF GROUPS A AND B ON PLACEMENT AVERAGES

GROUP AVERAGES	WORD MEANING				PARAGRAPH MEANING				TOTAL READING			
	OCTOBER	JANUARY	MARCH	TOTAL GAINS	OCTOBER	JANUARY	MARCH	TOTAL GAINS	OCTOBER	JANUARY	MARCH	TOTAL GAINS
GROUP A *	5.83	6.34	6.87	1.04	5.51	6.40	7.18	1.67	5.67	6.37	7.025	1.355
GROUP B #	5.79	6.44	6.55	.76	5.71	6.10	7.09	1.38	5.75	6.27	6.82	1.07

*Denotes group which started study as the experimental group (individualized reading).

#Denotes group which started study as the control group (basal reading).

between recreational reading and whether the student was in individualized reading at that time. Of course, most of the recreational reading would have taken place outside the classroom except for the time the student was actually in the individualized reading class. This may indicate, however, that Group A was stimulated to do more reading by starting the study in October with individualized reading. The stimulation of a new program, as was suggested earlier, may have motivated these students to do more reading. Table IV on page 31 shows the pages read by individual students and totals for the groups.

At the end of the study in March, the students were given a questionnaire relating to individualized reading. Twenty-five pupils (including the three students whose test results are not included in this study) completed the forms. The results of this questionnaire are found on the table on page 51 in the Appendix. As was stated previously, the questionnaires were returned unsigned to enable the answers given to be more frank and objective. Most of the students stated that they enjoyed individualized reading very much. Fourteen of the students replied that they enjoyed individualized reading more than reading with groups. They selected having conferences with the teacher as their first choice, with selection of their own reading material the second choice. Although thirteen of the children preferred having individualized reading all the time, twelve chose either to have the basal reader with groups part or all the time.

The parent questionnaire was also sent out in March. Twenty of

TABLE IV

NUMBER OF PAGES OF BOOKS READ FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES
DURING STUDY

Group and Student	Oct.-Jan.	Jan.-Mar.	Pages read Ind. vs. Basal *
<u>GROUP A</u>			
Ellen D.	12,027	19,208	-
Johnny S.	2,822	2,550	+
Brenda H.	5,891	11,547	-
Barbara S.	3,211	3,229	-
Jennifer J.	6,260	2,319	+
Doug P.	1,758	1,214	+
Philip S.	1,117	446	+
Larry P.	6,706	3,863	+
Randy V.	4,476	4,250	+
Kristin D.	1,040	2,014	-
Gaye H.	<u>1,362</u>	<u>2,435</u>	-
TOTALS	47,670	53,075	
<u>GROUP B</u>			
Brenda P.	5,261	3,243	-
Philip G.	3,149	2,984	-
Linda L.	521	584	+
Robert A.	1,348	1,701	+
Teresa C.	1,581	1,632	+
Linda N.	1,883	2,463	+
Louise P.	4,520	3,818	-
Cindy C.	6,469	3,748	-
Kent M.	3,161	2,518	-
Marion D.	8,904	16,486	+
Shari S.	<u>4,320</u>	<u>4,547</u>	+
TOTALS	41,117	43,724	

* The (+) sign indicates student read more while in individualized reading, while the (-) sign indicates that he read less while in individualized reading.

the twenty-five questionnaires were returned. The results of this survey are found on page 50 of the Appendix. The response of the parents who returned the form indicated there was added interest by most of the students in reading. One-half of the responses indicated that children liked to share what they were reading with their parents more than previously. Three-fourths of the parents responding felt that their children reacted favorably to individualized reading. About one-half of the parents indicated that their child was taking more interest in the newspaper. On the other hand, there seemed to be little change as far as magazine reading or use of the public library.

Although the primary purpose of the study was not to compare fifth against sixth graders, their scores were kept isolated within the groups so that a relationship could be determined. It is interesting to note that in both ten-week periods the sixth graders tended to make larger gains while they were in the individualized group, whereas, the fifth graders seemed to make more progress while in the basal reading group.

To illustrate this point, during the first ten weeks the sixth graders in individualized reading progressed an average of $+.91$ years while the sixth graders in the basal group had an average improvement of only $+.39$. On the other hand, fifth graders in individualized reading showed an average gain of $+.53$ while in basal they had an improvement of $+.67$. The second ten weeks had scores verifying the findings of the first period. Sixth graders in individualized reading gained an average

of $+.75$ while sixth graders in basal readers were improving $+.57$. The fifth grade individualized readers improved an average of $+.38$ in reading while the fifth grade basal reading group had gained $+.69$.

These figures, while not conclusive, may tend to show that sixth graders may be able to handle the increased freedom of an individualized program while fifth graders, who have one less year of reading experience, may respond better to the more rigidly structured basal reader program.

SUMMARY

As was stated earlier in the report, this was to be only a pilot study in the use of individualized reading in the classroom. This was a unique study in that only twenty-two students were involved in the actual testing and that it was a combination room of fifth and sixth grade students.

Test results from January and March indicated that the type of reading instruction did not seem to affect total reading scores to any great extent. The students in individualized reading tended to show more improvement in paragraph meaning scores while students in the basal reader seemed to do better in the word meaning section of the Stanford Achievement Test. The second ten-week period results seemed to verify the findings of the first ten weeks on this point.

Students who were in the individualized reading during the first half of the study seemed to show slightly more improvement in reading by the end of March. This could have resulted from more motivation on their part since they started in the new method of reading instruction. The fact that these students did more outside reading during the study verifies this hypothesis.

Both parents and students, through responses to questionnaires, indicated added interest in reading had developed during the year. Almost one-half of the students felt, however, that the basal reader

should be used at least part of the time in reading instruction.

Although not part of the original study, it was found that many of the sixth grade students in the room made better scores when they were in individualized reading, while many fifth graders scored better on tests when they were in the basal reading group. This writer feels that, with one year more reading experience, the sixth graders seemed to enjoy the freedom of the individualized reading program. Conversely, several fifth graders needed more teacher direction and control in their reading program. This was provided for them through the basal reading group.

Conclusions. It is this writer's belief, after conducting this study in the classroom, that there is a place for individualized reading instruction in the elementary school. Two of its great strengths are the motivation which results when a child is allowed to select his own reading materials and the fact that he may share his reading through a personal conference with his teacher. On the other hand, this writer believes that the basal reading program still offers the stability that an elementary school reading program needs. It seems to provide for a more organized atmosphere through which reading skills may be learned. It also provides a group atmosphere for the discussion of stories, vocabulary, workbooks, and so forth. Advocates of the individualized reading approach indicate that this can be done through their program as well, but it seems to be more difficult for most classroom teachers.

Recommendations. As a result of this pilot study it is recommended

that the school board and administration of Unified School District #383 consider further research work on a larger scale throughout the district relative to the use of individualized reading in the elementary school.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aukerman, Robert C. "After the Explosion: What Lies Ahead?" Grade Teacher, 84:114-5, March, 1967.

An article that supports the continued use of basal reader series as the primary source of reading instruction.

Barbe, Walter. Educators' Guide to Personalized Reading Instruction, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1961. 241 pp.

A book which is helpful in the mechanics of setting up an individualized reading program. It contains many helps and skills checklists.

_____. "Personalized or Individualized Reading Instruction", Education, 81:537-39, May, 1961.

Emphasizes the motivation of readers who, heretofore, have shown lack of interest in traditional reading approach.

Bierbaum, M. L. "Individualized Approach to Enrichment Reading," Grade Teacher, 81:85-6, November, 1963.

A presentation which explains ways in which the grouped method of teaching reading can be combined with certain elements of individualized reading for enrichment.

Carlton, Lessie and Robert H. Moore. "Individualized Reading," NEA Journal, 53:10-12, November, 1964.

A question and answer approach to clarifying questions which may arise concerning the individualized reading method.

Folcarelli, Ralph J. "Don't be Afraid of Individualized Reading," Grade Teacher, 83:110,152-53, November, 1966.

An article that emphasizes ways in which a teacher should seek cooperation with librarians and administrators before beginning an individualized reading program.

Fox, Gudelia and Raymond B. Fox. "The Individualized Reading Controversy," National Elementary Principal, 44:46-9, September, 1964.

This selection quotes authorities who are in favor of individualized reading and those who are opposed to including the method in the modern school curriculum.

Fox, Lorene K. and Constance McCullough. "Individualized Reading," NEA Journal, 47:162-3, March, 1958.

A debate concerning the relative merits of individualized reading.

- Gans, Roma. "Balanced Program," Grade Teacher, 84:126, March, 1967.
Stresses the importance of teaching the mechanics of reading but also developing within the pupil a love of reading.
- Groff, Patrick. "Helping Teachers Begin Individualized Reading," National Elementary Principal, 43:47-50, February, 1964.
A valuable selection in developing an individualized reading program within a school with emphasis on the part of the administrator in its development.
- Grotberg, Edith H. "Individualized Reading--A Symbol for Change," Education, 87:7-10, September, 1966.
This article cites the lack of any conclusive research that might demonstrate any advantage to individualized reading over the more traditional methods of instruction.
- Heffernan, Helen. "What is Individualized Reading?" Grade Teacher, 82:28, March, 1965.
This selection emphasizes the difference in child development as a reason for the logic of an individualized approach to reading.
- Jenkins, Marian. "Self-Selection in Reading," The Reading Teacher, 11:84-90, December, 1957.
A helpful report of research which indicated significant gains for a second grade group of students using individualized reading compared to a control group of second graders using ability grouping.
- Kaar, Harold. "An Experiment with Individualized Method of Teaching Reading," The Reading Teacher, 7:174, February, 1954.
Research results which show no significant difference between individualized reading and ability grouping in teaching vocabulary and reading comprehension. Research done with the use of third graders.
- Karlin, Robert. "Some Reactions to Individualized Reading," The Reading Teacher, 11:95-8, December, 1957.
This writer cites an experiment in Michigan in which children matched according to I.Q. showed no significant difference in learning through individualized or grouping methods.
- Kenny, Cora. "Trying Out an Individualized Reading Program," The Reading Teacher, 16:82.5, September, 1962.
A good study on how individual children reacted to being taught with an individualized reading method.
- Lazar, May. "Individualized Reading: A Dynamic Approach," The Reading Teacher, 11:75-83, December, 1957.
The author in the selection attempts to answer criticisms against individualized reading.

Lofthouse, Yvonne. "Individualized Reading--Significant Research," The Reading Teacher, 16:35-7, September, 1962.

An analysis of research which had been done on individualized reading. Author felt there was not sufficient evidence to warrant changing from traditional methods.

Miel, Alice (ed.). Individualizing Reading Practices. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1958. 91 pp.

This book contains reports from a group of authorities who discuss individualized reading at different grade levels.

O'Connor, L. Y. "Individualized Instruction in Reading," Instructor, 73:122-3, September, 1963.

Emphasizes the teacher, tester, diagnostician responsibilities of the classroom teacher in an individualized reading program.

Pescosolido, John R., Leo M. Schell, and Marie-Jeanne Laurent. Reading Approaches and Rituals. Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Book Company, 1967. 133 pp.

Two chapters in the book deal with methods of sharing books in an individualized program, how an individual conference between teacher and pupil is conducted, and other useful information about setting up an individualized program.

Peters, Norman. "Teaching the Basic Skills in Individualized Reading," Education, 83:27-30, September, 1962.

This selection develops methods by which vocabulary, comprehension, and word attack skills can be taught in an individualized reading program.

Rothrock, Dayton. "Teachers Surveyed: A Decade of Individualized Reading," Elementary English, 45:754-7, October, 1968.

A survey of teachers in five midwestern states which was conducted for the purpose of studying the impact and importance of individualized reading on the curriculum.

Safford, Alton L. "Evaluation of an Individualized Reading Program," The Reading Teacher, 12:266-70, April, 1960.

An important research report which showed that progress in reading with seven classes from third to sixth grades was inferior to more traditional methods in average gains for a year. Safford contends that these results differ from others because the teachers were not informed that their class was being used in the research.

Sartain, Harry. Contributions in Reading. Boston: Ginn and Company, Number 28. 8 pp. (pamphlet).

Cites many advantages to the continuation of use of the basal reader but feels that the individual pupil-teacher conference is a strength of the individualized reading approach.

Sartain, Harry. "Research on Individualized Reading," Education, 81:515-20, May, 1961.

This presentation points out many weaknesses within the individualized reading method.

_____. "The Roseville Experiment With Individualized Reading," The Reading Teacher, 13:277-81, April, 1960.

This article reports on a research project in Roseville, Minnesota in which no significant difference was found in an individualized group and a traditional group with the exception of word recognition where the control group was significantly better. Ten classes of second graders were used.

Schwartzberg, Herbert. "What Children Think of Individualized Reading," The Reading Teacher, 16:86-9, November, 1962.

This study shows that both gifted children and children below grade level in reading ability reacted well to individualized reading. No control groups were used in the study.

Smith, Lois and Jane Becher. "Self-Selection With Intermediate Children," The Reading Teacher, 14:83-88, November, 1960.

This is a very useful source because it contains samples of questionnaires to be given to pupils to determine their attitudes as a result of individualized reading. This article also cites some research in Appleton, Wisconsin in which classes using individualized teaching methods exceeded the rest of the city in reading skills by six months. The research was carried on for a year and a half but there was no control group.

Staiger, Ralph C. "Some Aspects of Individualized Reading," Education, 80:527-9, May, 1960.

This selection points out that there must be a sufficient library and competent teachers able to cope with diverse needs of pupils before an individualized reading program will be successful.

Stauffer, Russell G. "Individualized and Group-Type Directed Reading Instruction," Elementary English, 37:375-82, October, 1960.

This article suggests that individualized reading is not a method but an attitude of the teacher and the child and suggests the utilization of both the basal reader and trade books to accomplish the aims of reading instruction.

Veatch, Jeannette. Individualizing Your Reading Program. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1959. 242 pp.

A very thorough presentation of the individualized teaching method. This book contains many practical aids and suggestions on implementing such a program. There are also articles by some of the proponents of individualized reading and some research is cited within them.

West, Roland. Individualized Reading Instruction. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1964. 168 pp.

A very useful book which contains charts and checklists which can be used in individualized reading instruction. In addition, the book contains suggestions for use of the library in the individualized reading program.

Witty, P. A. "Individualized Reading: A Postscript," Elementary English, 41:211-17, March, 1964.

The author makes a resume of articles previously written and cites many authorities who feel that a balanced reading program is needed with individualized reading being integrated into the reading curriculum.

APPENDIX

TABLE V

OCTOBER SCORES USED FOR THE PAIRING AND RANDOM PLACING
OF STUDENTS INTO GROUPS

Name of Student	Word Mean. Oct.	Par. Mean. Oct.	Tot. Read. Oct.	Group Placement
<u>6th</u>				
Brenda P.	6.4	6.8	6.6	B
Ellen D.	6.4	5.3	5.85	A
Philip G.	5.9	5.2	5.55	B
Johnny S.	4.9	5.7	5.3	A
Linda L.	4.2	4.4	4.3	B
Brenda H.	4.7	4.8	4.75	A
Robert A.	7.5	6.6	7.05	B
Barbara S.	6.8	6.8	6.8	A
Teresa C.	7.6	6.6	7.1	B
Jennifer J.	7.3	6.9	7.1	A
<u>5th</u>				
Doug P.	3.3	3.4	3.35	A
Linda N.	3.7	2.7	3.2	B
Louise P.	3.6	3.9	3.75	B
Philip S.	3.3	3.8	3.55	A
Larry P.	5.6	5.3	5.45	A
Cindy C.	5.1	5.3	5.2	B
Kent M.	5.2	6.8	6.0	B
Randy V.	7.3	4.6	5.95	A
Marion D.	7.0	6.8	6.9	B
Kristin D.	7.0	6.3	6.65	A
Shari S.	7.5	7.7	7.6	B
Gaye H.	7.5	7.7	7.6	A
*Kirby H. (6th)	4.7	3.6	4.15	none
*Jack L. (5th)	2.7	3.0	2.85	none
*Debbie E. (5th)	7.5	9.5+	8.5	none

*Denotes student whose score did not match well enough with another student to be included in testing section of study.

Note: Final group averages show Group A word meaning 5.83, paragraph meaning 5.51, total reading 5.66; Group B word meaning 5.79, paragraph meaning 5.71, total reading 5.75.

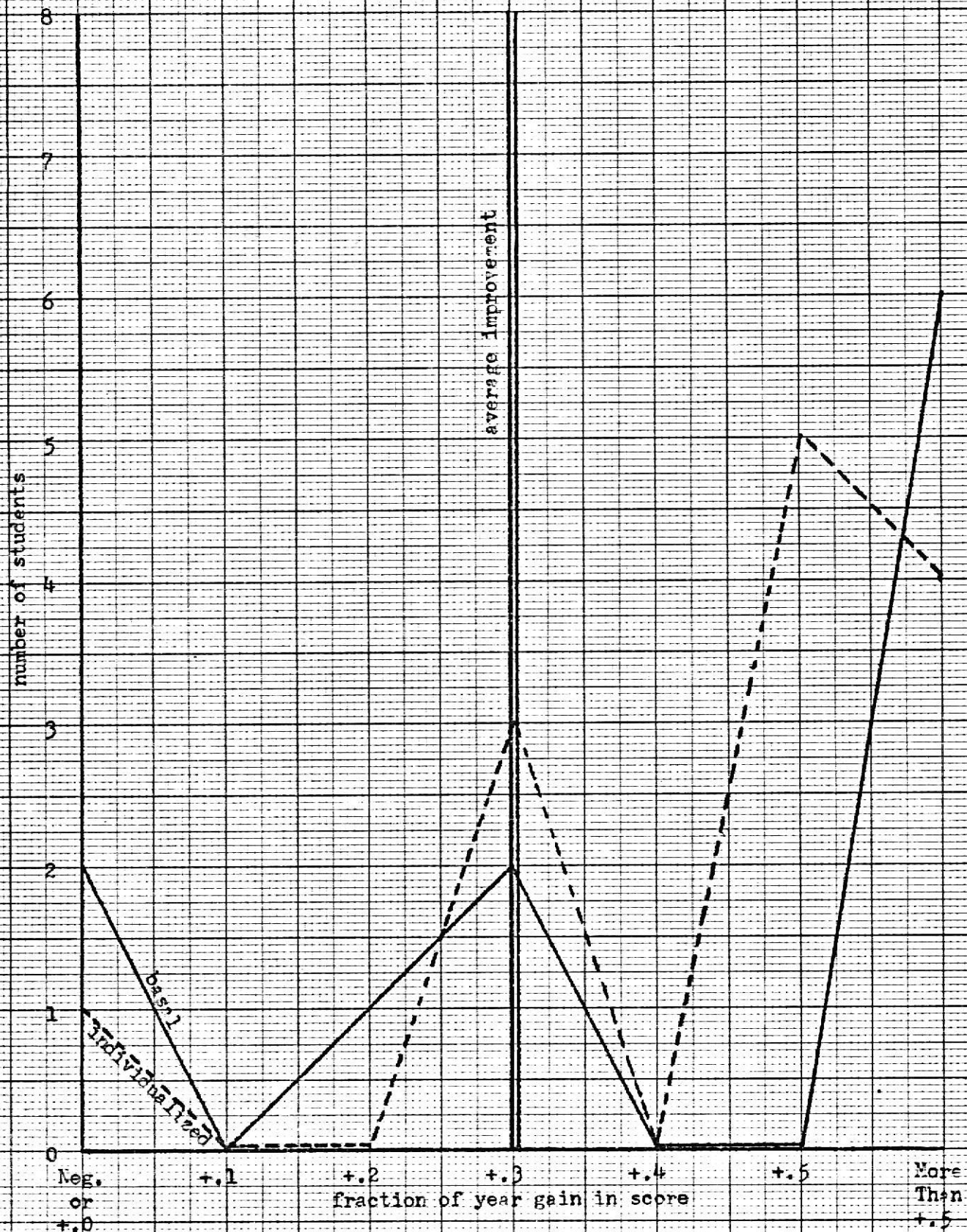


FIGURE 1

GAINS IN WORD MEANING SCORES (OCTOBER-JANUARY)

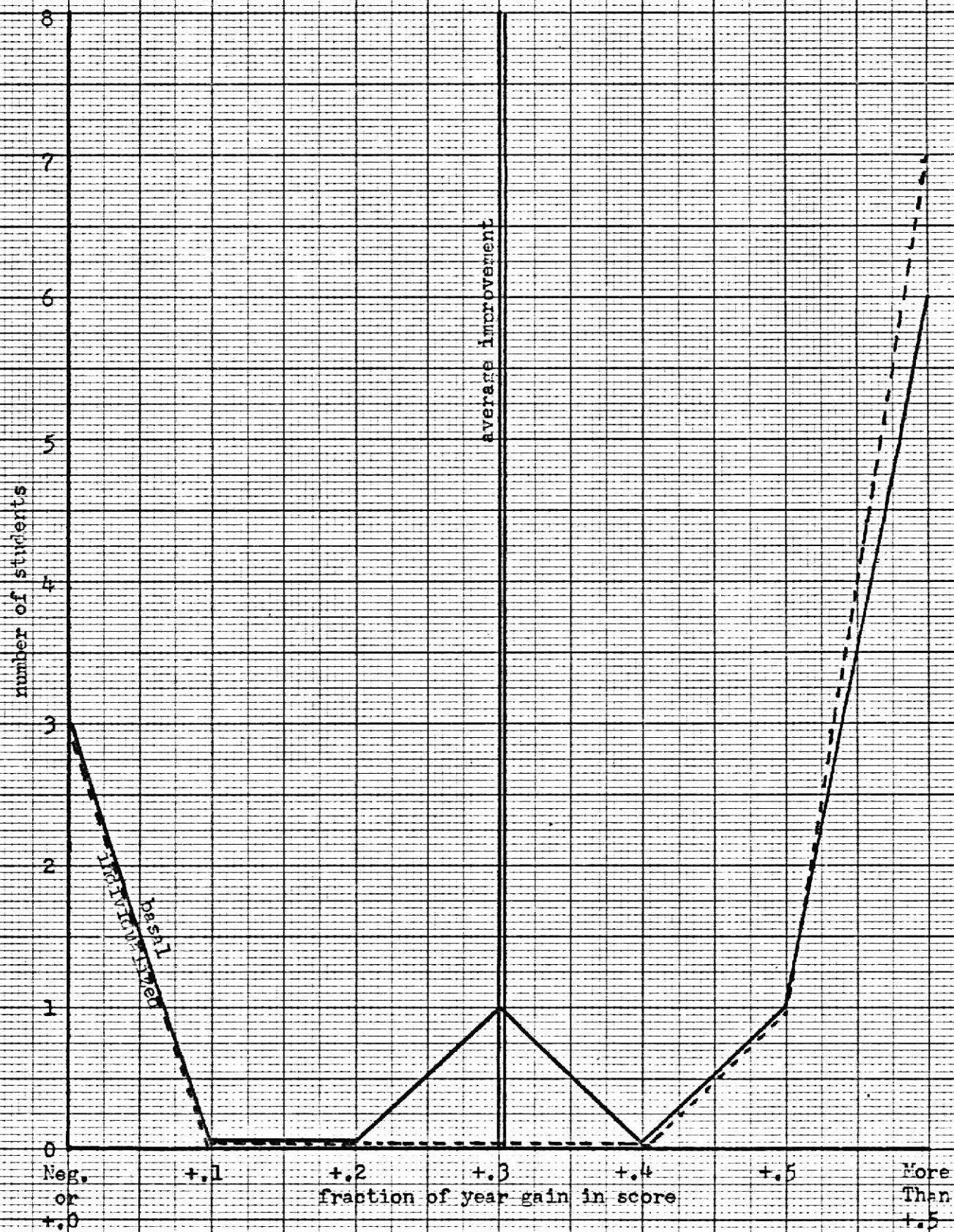


FIGURE 2

GAINS IN PARAGRAPH LEARNING SCORES (OCTOBER-JANUARY)

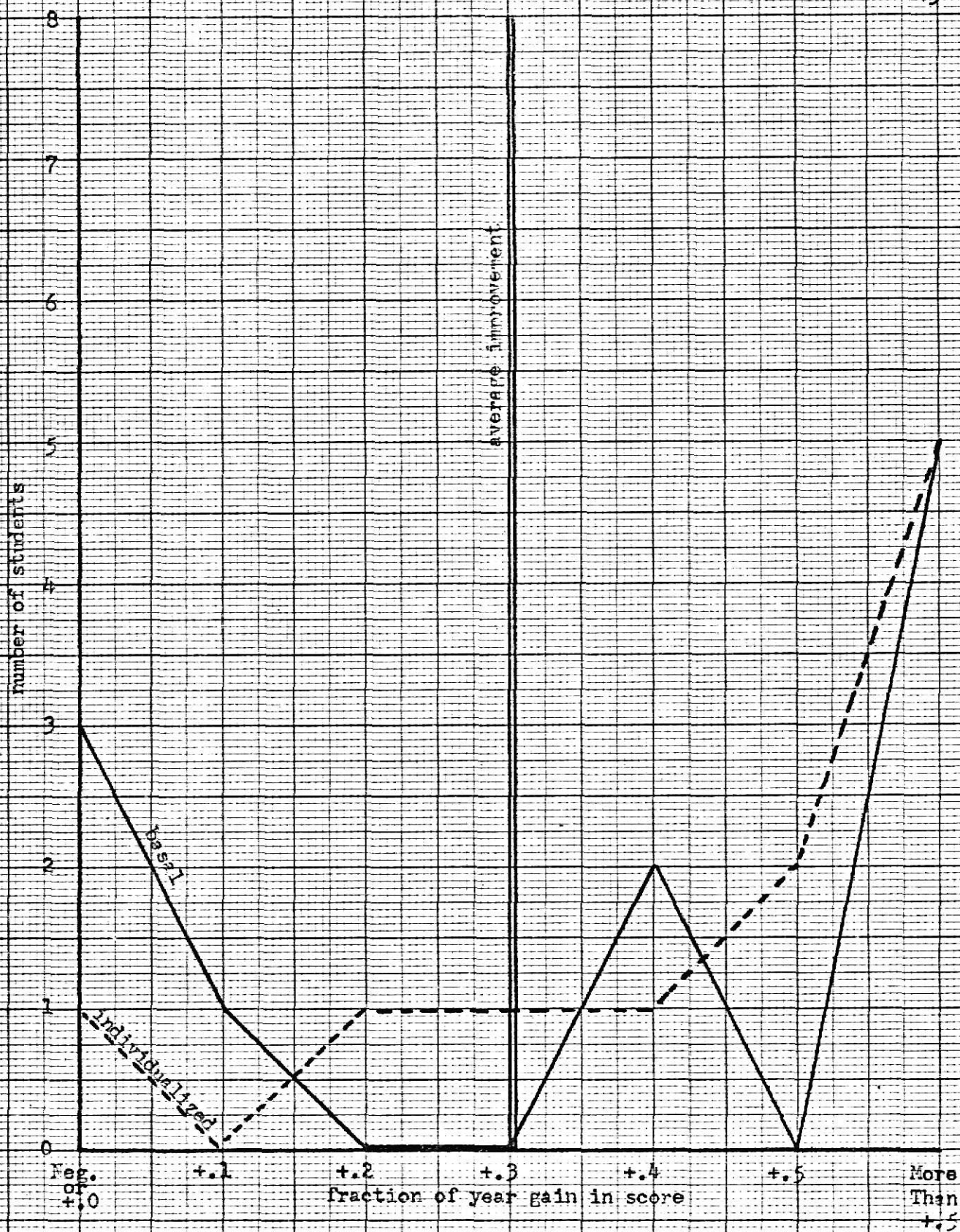


FIGURE 3

GAINS IN TOTAL READING SCORES (OCTOBER-JANUARY)

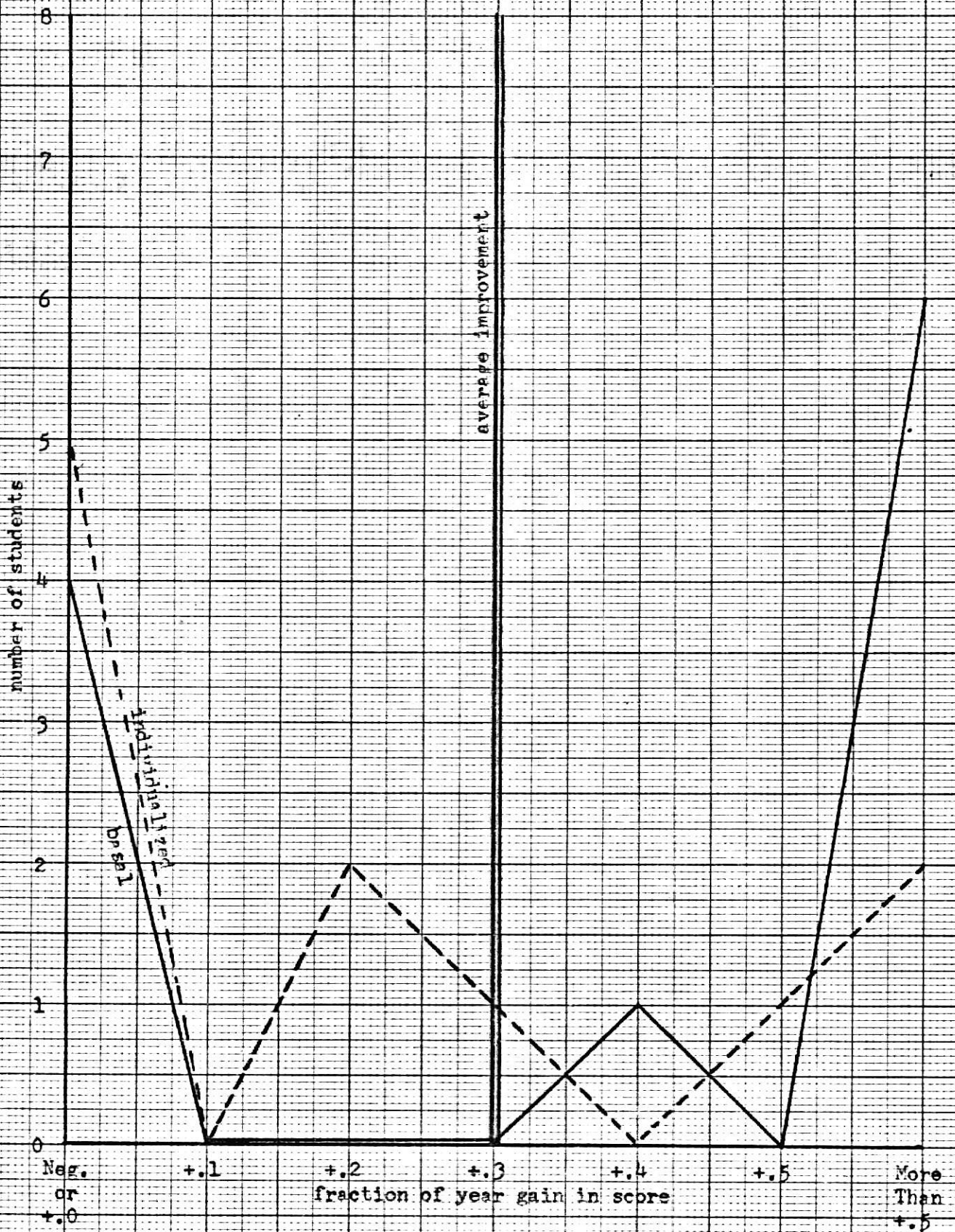


FIGURE 4

GAINS IN WORD MEANING SCORES (JANUARY-MARCH)

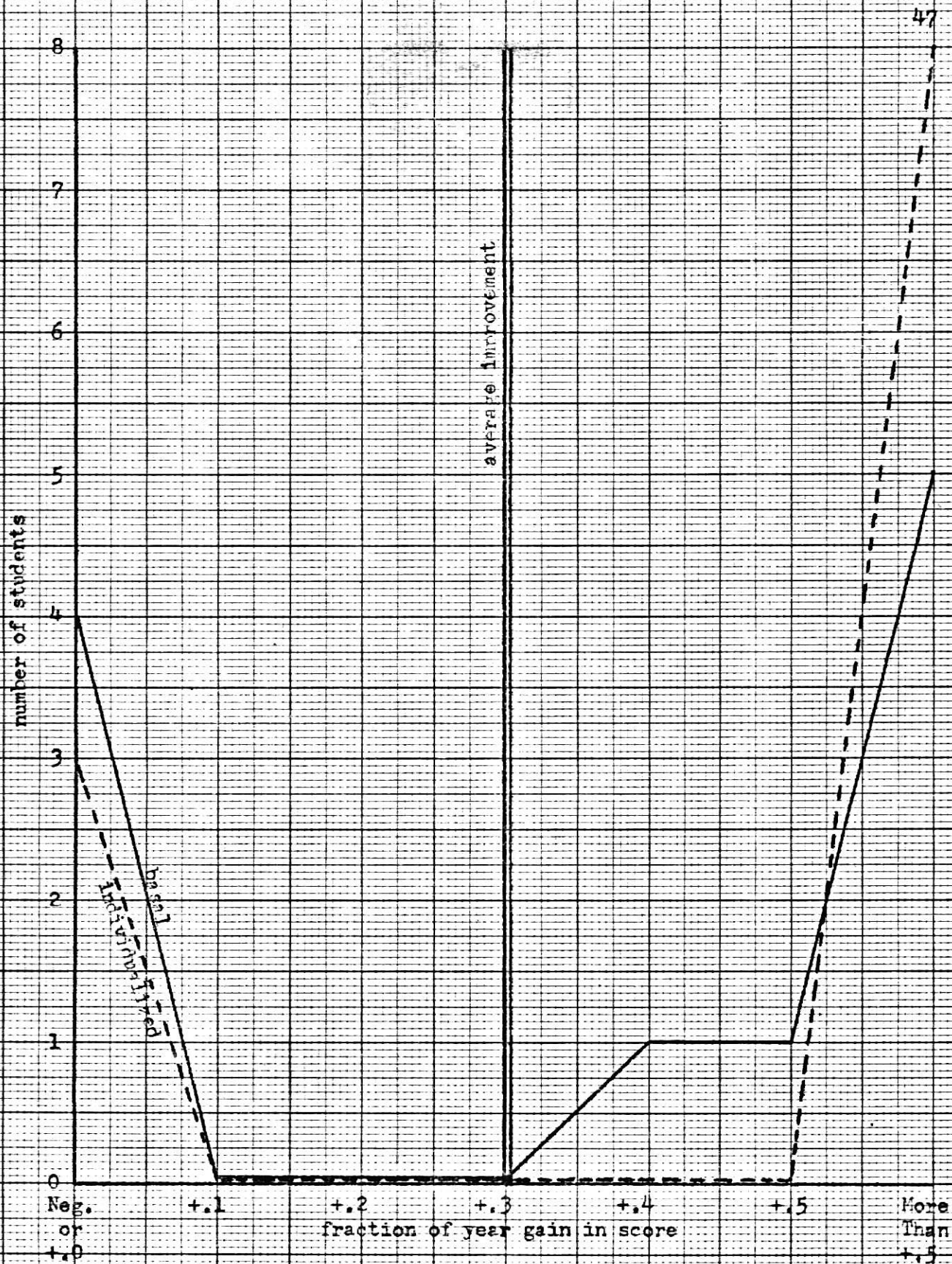


FIGURE 5

GAINS IN PARAGRAPH MEANING SCORES (JANUARY-MARCH)

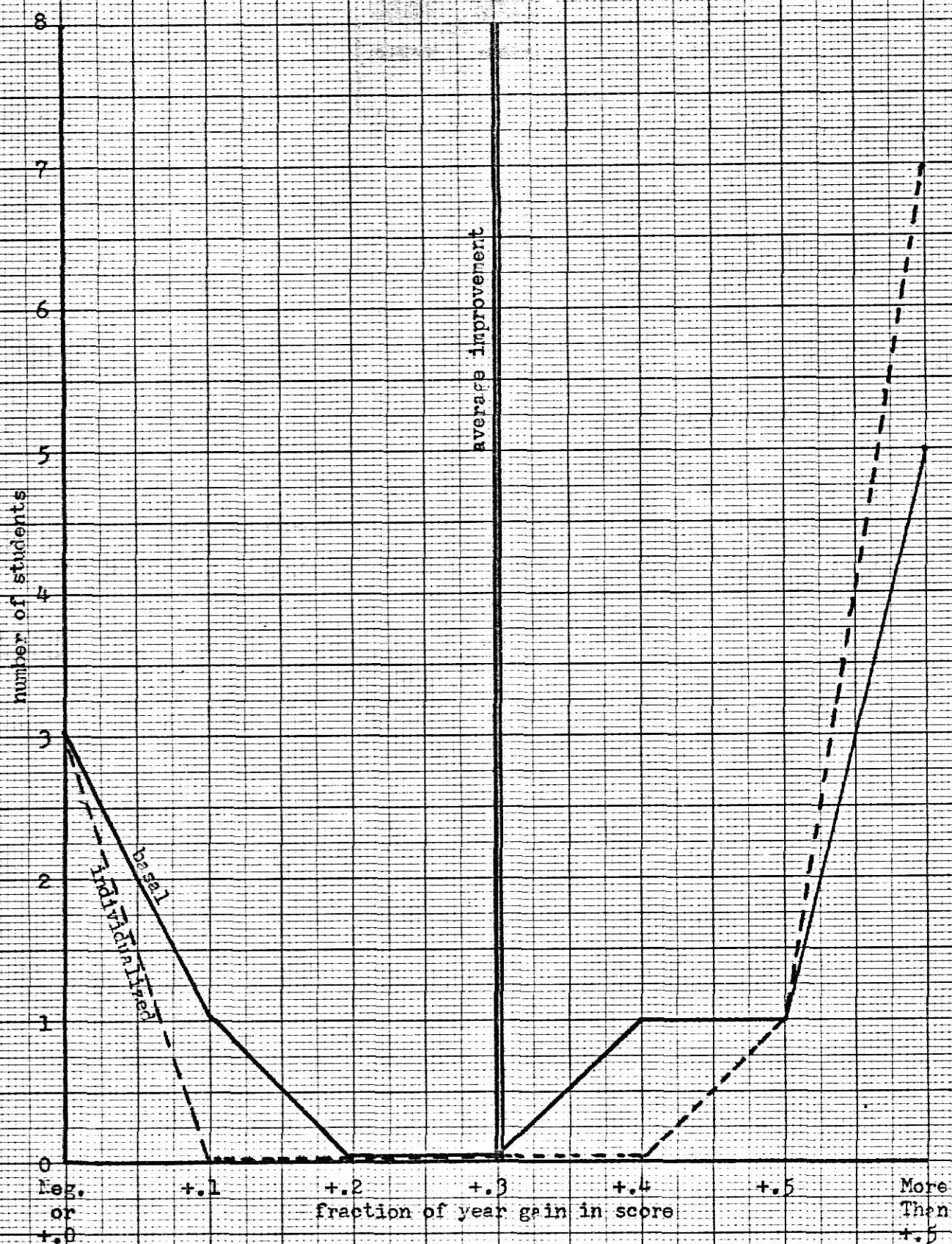


FIGURE 6

GAINS IN TOTAL READING SCORES (JANUARY-MARCH)

April 14, 1969

Dear Parents,

This year in grades five and six, we have been doing some work with individualized reading. Each boy and girl in our class has spent approximately three months in individualized reading and the rest of the year in our basal reading series.

Individualized reading gives each child an opportunity to select the materials that he wishes to read and allows him to work with the teacher by having individual conferences each week. It is hoped that by this program the student will be stimulated to do more reading both in and out of school and also to widen his reading interests.

It would be helpful to us if the attached questionnaire were returned to school within the coming week. In this way, we could review the parent's reaction to the reading program as it has been conducted in the fifth and sixth grades at Strong School this year.

It is not necessary to sign the questionnaire. Your cooperation will help evaluate the reading curriculum.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Harold E. Brown

FIGURE 7

COVER LETTER TO PARENTS ACCOMPANYING QUESTIONNAIRE
ON INDIVIDUALIZED READING

Please check one of the following categories under each question:

1. This year my child seems to be reading
 - 14 more
 - 5 about the same
 - 0 less
 - 1 don't know
2. This year my child seems to
 - 8 read books of more different types
 - 8 read the same kinds of books as before
 - 1 read fewer kinds of books than before
 - 3 don't know
3. My child seems to be reading magazines
 - 4 more
 - 0 less
 - 13 about the same
 - 0 don't know
 - not at all
4. My child seems to like to read newspapers
 - 9 more
 - 0 less
 - 6 about the same
 - 2 don't know
 - 2 not at all
 - 1 (no response from parent)
5. My child likes to discuss the materials he has read with his parents
 - 10 more
 - 0 less
 - 7 about the same
 - 3 not at all
6. My child seems to enjoy reading the following part of the newspaper most
 - 1 front page
 - 12 comics
 - 1 sports
 - 3 editorials
 - 1 none of the above
 - 2 (multiple response from parent)
7. My child's reaction to individualized reading seems to be
 - 15 favorable
 - 3 unfavorable
 - 1 no reaction
 - 1 don't know
8. This year my child is using the public library
 - 6 more
 - 0 less
 - 9 about the same
 - 4 not at all
 - 1 (no response from parent)

FIGURE 8

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESPONSES
ON INDIVIDUALIZED READING

1. I enjoyed individualized reading

17	very much
6	some
2	very little
0	not at all

2. I enjoyed individualized reading

19	more
3	about the same
3	less than reading in groups with the basal reader

3. List by number according to what you liked most about individualized reading. *

97	having conferences with the teacher
90	reading a book or reading material I selected
71	reading the paper and giving reports
33	doing worksheets
84	more time to read individually

4. If I had my choice I would prefer

13	individualized reading all the time
8	individualized reading part of the time and in groups with the basal reader part of the time
4	using basal reader in groups all the time

5. Make any further comments about individualized reading this year that you think would be helpful.

* Scores shown in blanks under number 3 are computed by giving five points for first choice, four points for second choice, et cetera, so that a fifth choice receives only one point.

FIGURE 9

PUPIL QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESPONSES ON INDIVIDUALIZED
READING

A PILOT STUDY COMPARING THE INDIVIDUALIZED AND GROUPED METHODS OF
READING INSTRUCTION IN THE FIFTH AND SIXTH GRADES

by

HAROLD E. BROWN

B. S., Kansas State University, 1950

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1969

ABSTRACT

This pilot study was conducted for the purpose of comparing the individualized reading method in fifth and sixth grades with the more traditional basal reading method in which children are ability grouped. The study was unique in that it was conducted in a combination fifth and sixth grade room.

Children were paired according to scores in word meaning and paragraph meaning they obtained on a Stanford Achievement Test taken in early October. Students were then placed at random in either Group A or B. Group A became the experimental group (individualized reading) while Group B became the control group (basal reading). In January, another reading battery of the Stanford Achievement Test was taken and scores were compared. Group A then became the control group and Group B the experimental group for the purpose of verifying the findings of the first ten weeks of the study. The children were given another reading battery from the Stanford Achievement Test in March.

In addition to comparing average growth in reading between the two methods, a comparison was also made to determine whether taking individualized reading prior to the basal reading was advantageous or detrimental.

According to test results, there was little difference in the average total reading gains for the two reading methods. During the

first ten weeks Group A had an average total reading gain of .70 of a year while Group B gained .54 of a year. At the end of the second ten weeks Group A had gained an additional .58 of a year while Group B gained .54 of a year. As far as the sections of the test are concerned, the groups in individualized reading tended to be better in paragraph meaning gains (scores of .89 and .95 compared to .44 and .62). The basal reading groups made a better gain in word meaning (.65 and .54 compared to .51 and .12). This writer believes that there was more concentration of word study of various types in the basal reader group while students in individualized reading had a tendency to comprehend what they were reading more because of self-selection of materials.

Group A, which started in individualized reading and then changed to the basal reader program in January, showed slightly more improvement during the study than Group B. Their average word meaning improvement during the twenty weeks was 1.04 years (compared to .76), an average improvement in paragraph meaning of 1.67 (compared to 1.38), and an average total reading improvement of 1.355 years (compared to 1.07). Though not large differences, they may indicate that Group A was more motivated because they started the year with a new approach to reading.

Parent and student questionnaires indicated increased interest in reading at home and school by many students as a result of their experiences with individualized reading.

Because of the value of the pupil-teacher conference and the increased motivation that results from a child using self-selection of

reading materials, it is this writer's belief that there is a place for individualized reading instruction in the elementary school. It is his thought, however, that the basal reading group still lends stability and organization to the reading curriculum for the child. As a result of this study it is recommended that further research be done within the entire Unified School District #383 on individualized reading in the elementary school.